

The Brethren Evangelist

Official Organ of the Brethren Church

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This paper maintains that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the only and ultimate sources of appeal in matters of faith and practice.

TERMS

1. The subscription price is \$1.50 per year, postpaid.
2. To the deserving poor \$1.00.
3. To one who has paid his own subscription at \$1.50 and wishes to pay for another, the price is \$1.00.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Write with pen and ink, and on one side of the paper only.
2. Business matters should not appear on the same sheet with communications for publication.
3. Be brief—write and rewrite, boil down, say as much as you can in as few words as possible.
4. In ordering change of address, give the old as well as the new address in full.

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Publishers' Department

Ecumenical Missionary Report

We are in receipt of a communication from the Committee of the recent Ecumenical Missionary Conference stating that no advanced subscriptions for the Report will be received after July 15th. All who desire to secure the two volumes (handsomely bound in cloth) at the low rate of \$1.00 should remit at once to the Rev. Edwin M. Bliss, chairman, 156 Fifth Ave., New York. After July 15 the regular price for the books will be \$1.50, and they may be ordered thru booksellers or the American Tract Society, New York.

Why Not Three Thousand Subscribers?

Some time ago we sent addressed postal cards to the pastors in the Brethren church asking them to give the post offices at which members in their charge get mail, and also give the number of members in their several congregations. The purpose was to learn what proportion of the members in each charge get the EVANGELIST. The plan has proven eminently successful, and below we give a few of the averages. The name and location of the charge is withheld, as we have selected those where the least number of papers go, and, to say the least the report is not very creditable, and explains why we do not have the 3,000 subscribers. Perhaps some of our pastors would be surprised to learn what proportion of the membership take the EVANGELIST. The report herewith submitted includes eight congregations as follows:

- Number one, 1 paper to 9 members.
- Number two, 1 paper to 15 members.
- Number three, 1 paper to 19 members.
- Number four, 1 paper to 19 members.
- Number five, 1 paper to 20 members.
- Number six, 1 paper to 26 members.
- Number seven, 1 paper to 30 members.
- Number eight, 1 paper to 42 members.

Several congregations report one paper to each five members, and in one congregation there is one paper on an average for every four and one half members. A paper to every five members is good; one paper to every four members in a congregation is very good, and judging from the reports thus far received, one EVANGELIST to every five members in the brotherhood would give us a circulation of 4,000. Think of an EVANGELIST to every 42 members, and

this in a congregation with a membership of several hundred. Is this as it should be? Let the reader be the judge. Study this report, pastors, look into the matter, find out if you can whether yours is one of the eight congregations reported.

The Mailing List

Now and then we have complaints come to the office in reference to the mailing list. It is charged against us that changes are not promptly made, and that new subscriptions do not receive the attention that should be given to business of that character. We are willing to take our share of the blame, but in justice to ourselves it behooves us to say that in many cases delays are caused by the carelessness of correspondents. Let us submit a few cases that you may understand what we mean.

1. Sometimes people write us, giving the office from which they write, but not the one at which they get their mail. We had an instance of this kind during the time of Brother Bauman's presence in the office. A letter dated at Burlington, Ind., the writer requested that his paper be discontinued, but the name could not be found at that place, and after a long search it was found at some other office. Brother Bauman looked up a similar case from Va. Please remember that offices are arranged alphabetically, but names are not, and it may take us a half day to hunt your name on the list when the proper office is not given. Whose is the fault in a case of this kind? There are many just like it.

2. We have before us several letters at this time, asking us to continue their paper, but without an address, and hence we are unable to do anything with it. Is there a single person in the brotherhood that would ask us, in view of the heavy work on our hands, to look thru the entire mailing list several times a week trying to find the names of persons who are too careless to give their address? You would be surprised to learn how many such letters come to this office.

3. Not a few who request a change of address fail to give the former address, and of course we are unable to do anything with the request. Such notices we receive each week.

4. Perhaps you would be surprised to know how many people drop letters without stamping them, and of course the Postmaster writes us requesting a two cent stamp enclosed in an envelope to have the letter forwarded. This is a frequent occurrence. Of course the writer meanwhile delivers himself of some of his righteous indignation, and the Publishing House is scored for its negligence. If your letter has not sufficient postage the postmaster will mail the letter and collect at this end, but when there is no postage at all, the postmaster is not allowed to forward the letter. If we were to mention the names of persons who thus drop letters, no doubt the writers would themselves be surprised. It is not done to save postage, but thru negligence. Such letters are always delayed from two to three weeks. But the Publishing House gets the blame for it all.

5. This morning we received a notice from a subscriber that his paper is not coming regularly. There are twenty-five or thirty subscribers at this same office, and the name of the person who made complaint is now on the list properly credited 50-00 and the paper must go out with the rest of them to that office. Where is the trouble? It is not here.

In view of these facts it becomes each one to be charitable, at least withhold criticism until the trouble is located, so that the proper person may be made to carry the blame.

We know of a good brother who wrote an article for the paper, and by mistake put it into a pigeon hole in his desk. Of course we got a scolding letter for throwing his manuscript into the wastebasket. Afterwards the brother discovered that he had put his manuscript into the desk instead of mailing it, but the brother did not have sufficient charity to write us in reference to the matter and apologize for his unjust criticism.

Another sent an article to this office on the subject of "Charity," with the following instructions: "Un-

less this is published in the EVANGELIST there will be no more subscriptions from this place." The spirit that accompanied the article seemed to us somewhat out of harmony with the subject treated.

Information Bureau

1. Should backsliders who wish to return to the church be baptized?

Baptism is a symbol of birth out of the old self-life which is called death, into the new, higher life in fellowship and vital touch with God the Father, Son and Spirit. Matt. 28: 19; John 3: 5; Gal. 3: 27; Rom. 6: 4.

We take it that this birth is not repeated any more than the natural birth into this world and that consequently the symbol is not to be repeated, and that this is the fact referred to in Eph. 4: 5, "One baptism" rather than anything concerning the mode of baptism.

Sickness is not death. The backslider should not be treated as one having wholly lost his spiritual life. That is a hard thing for one really converted to do. Our duty toward the backslidden is given in Gal. 6: and II Thes. 3: 15.

If one has succeeded in grieving away the Spirit and has really lost the light that is in him he will not seek it again. Mark 3: 28, 29; Heb. 6: 4-6; II Pet. 2: 20-22.

Thus in either case rebaptism would not seem to be necessary according to the Scriptures. In the case of those passing from one denomination to another a different principle must be considered.

2. Explain who is meant in Matt. 10: 28 and Luke 12: 4 when Jesus says, "Fear him."

The person referred to as being "able to cast both soul and body into Gehenna" is evidently God because he only has this power. Satan is not more powerful than God, nor by any manner of means equal to God. He may hinder, but he can not prevent God's work of grace. He may deceive, but he can not destroy. See John 10: 27-29, "No one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Eph. 6: 11, "That ye may be able to stand against all the wiles of the devil." Jas. 4: 7, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you," and similar passages.

Jesus says, "Fear him," using the word fear in the sense in which it is so often used in the Scriptures, meaning to reverence, to give heed to. He would say, "The body is temporal; the character is eternal." Men may deal with the body, but God judges the soul. Guide your life therefore with reverence to that which is most important—your moral character before God, for it will determine your eternal destiny.

3. How did there come to be so many denominations in the world?

This question would require a long answer for its full discussion. The early church itself was divided on important questions, such as circumcision (Acts 15: 5-30) and fellowship with the Gentiles (Gal. 2: 1-15) and even upon questions of expediency (Acts 14: 28-40) and it was not long after the days of the apostles until heretical sects were organized. By the third century divisions on doctrinal belief had become so great that a general council was called to formulate a creed which might represent the orthodox belief. During the succeeding ages the Roman Catholic church gained the ascendancy, but minor branches of the church continued to exist. Some of them, as the Waldenses, who are very like the Brethren in many ways, are organized to this day.

After the Reformation, when the Protestant body of the church split off from the Catholic, attention was turned anew to the study of the Scriptures by Protestant leaders. The Bible had become a strange book to the mass of the Catholics. Being resurrected, translated and interpreted by leader differing, is education and natural temperament, it was inevitable that they should get different doctrines out of it. Each leader had followers who were organized into